

**Abstract**

This invention is directed to methods and compositions for sorting and/or determining microscopic organisms or cells. The methods and compositions are directed to the use of molecular probes to selectively stain the organisms or cells in combination  
5 with the use of binding partners to selectively immobilize the stained organisms or cells to a solid carrier. By combining the selectivity of both molecular probes and binding partners in an orthogonal method for staining and immobilization, these methods and compositions increase both the discriminating power of the assays and/or the certainty of the result obtained therefrom.

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